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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/655,226	09/05/2000	Yuka Sakazume	SONY-UO148	7761
29175	7590	03/31/2004	EXAMINER	
BELL, BOYD & LLOYD, LLC P. O. BOX 1135 CHICAGO, IL 60690-1135			GAUTHIER, GERALD	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2645	
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/655,226

Applicant(s)

SAKAZUME, YUKA

Examiner

Gerald Gauthier

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 March 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. **Claims 1-12** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Matthews et al. (US 4,602,129).

Regarding **claim 1**, Matthews discloses an electronic audio communications system with versatile message delivery (column 1, lines 12-17), (which reads on claimed “a communication system in which a plurality of communication terminals (18 on FIG. 1), which are connected to a network (column 4, line 18 “telephone communications network”) including a Public Switched Network (FIG. 1) in a category thereof, mutually communicate through communication data addressed to a common phone number (column 22, line 62 “an address”) issued by a communication terminal (18 on FIG. 1) being a management terminal”), comprising:

a phone number management unit (column 22, line 54 "an addressee"), a message management unit (10 on FIG. 1) and a bulletin board unit (column 70, line 34 "verbal bulletin board") provided in the network (column 4, lines 24-40) [The telephone communication network multiple PBXs with a variety of user terminals and the voice mail system including the verbal bulletin board];

means for registering a predetermined communication terminal (column 22, line 64 "previously define individual telephone numbers") so as to correspond to the issued common phone number (column 22, line 62 "as an address" which is a telephone number) by sending an identification name (column 22, line 64 "defined individual telephone number" which identified a communication terminal) of the predetermined communication terminals of the plurality of communication terminals to the phone number management unit in correspondence with the common phone number issued from the management terminal (column 22, lines 54-68) [The user dials the telephone numbers to be added in the distribution list code and the list is translated as an address of three digits];

means for sending a message file (column 22, line 66 "a single voice message") from a registered communication terminal (column 22, line 65 "The user") using the common phone number to other registered communication terminals (column 22, line 66 "a number of people") via the message management unit when a first mode in which the message file is to be directly sent to the other communication terminals is selected and leaving the message file in the message management unit (column 22, line 65 to column 23, line 2) [The voice mail system sends a single voice message to a number of

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people using the distribution list independently to each person within the group] and notifying the other registered communication terminals of arrival of the message file when a second mode in which any registered communication terminal accesses to the message management unit to receive the message file is selected (column 28, lines 18-46) [The inquiry function which enables the user to call the voice mail system after the system notifies the user for having messages waiting in a mailbox].

means for leaving a message (column 70, line 35 "recorded messages") sent by accessing from a registered communication terminal (column 70, line 35 "the user") to the common phone number on the bulletin board unit (column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows the user to record a message and the recipient would use the feature known as verbal bulletin board]; and

means for reading at any time the message file left in the message management unit, in a case where the message file is left in the message management unit, and the message left on the bulletin board unit (column 70, lines 2-33) [The system allows other users to access the receive only message address to hear messages that are stored in the received only message address], in a case where the message is left on the bulleting board unit, from an arbitrary one of the other registered communication terminals (column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows other users to access the receive only message address to hear message therein using the verbal bulletin board].

Regarding **claims 2, 5, 8 and 11**, Matthews discloses wherein each of the communication terminals has an identification name which is any one of a telephone number, an E-mail address and an identification number assigned to each of the communication terminal and an identification number assigned to a medium in a case where the communication terminal is capable of using the medium (column 22, lines 54-68).

Regarding **claims 3, 6, 9 and 12**, Matthews discloses wherein the message file and the message contain one or more information mode selected from voice information, character information and image information, respectively (column 22, lines 54-68).

Regarding **claim 4**, Matthews discloses an electronic audio communications system with versatile message delivery (column 1, lines 12-17), (which reads on claimed "a communication system in which a plurality of communication terminals, which are connected to a network including a Public Switched Network in a category thereof, mutually communicate through communication data addressed to a common phone number issued by a communication terminal being a management terminal"), comprising:

a phone number management unit (column 22, line 54 "an addressee"), a message management unit (10 on FIG. 1) and a bulletin board unit (column 70, line 34 "verbal bulletin board") provided in the network (column 4, lines 24-40) [The telephone

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communication network multiple PBXs with a variety of user terminals and the voice mail system including the verbal bulletin board];

means for registering, after being accessed by an arbitrary one of the plurality of communication terminals (column 22, line 64 “previously define individual telephone numbers”) using the issued common phone number and receiving a confirmation by the management terminal, the arbitrary one of the communication terminals in correspondence with the common phone number issued from the management terminal (column 22, lines 54-68) [The user dials the telephone numbers to be added in the distribution list code and the list is translated as an address of three digits];

means for sending a message file sent by accessing from a registered communication terminal to the common phone number to other registered communication terminals via the message management unit when a first mode in which the message file is to be directly sent to the other communication terminals is selected (column 22, line 65 to column 23, line 2) [The voice mail system sends a single voice message to a number of people using the distribution list independently to each person within the group] and leaving the message file in the message management unit when a second mode in which any registered communication terminal accesses to the message management unit to receive the message file is selected (column 28, lines 18-46) [The inquiry function which enables the user to call the voice mail system after the system notifies the user for having messages waiting in a mailbox];

means for leaving a message sent by accessing from a registered communication terminals to the common phone number on the bulletin board unit

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(column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows the user to record a message and the recipient would use the feature known as verbal bulletin board]; and

means for reading at any time the message file left in the message management unit, in a case where the message file is left in the message management unit, and the message left on the bulletin board unit, in a case where the message is left on the bulletin board unit, from an arbitrary one of the other registered communication terminals (column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows other users to access the receive only message address to hear message therein using the verbal bulletin board].

Regarding **claim 7**, Matthews discloses an electronic audio communications system with versatile message delivery (column 1, lines 12-17), (which reads on claimed “a communication method in which a plurality of communication terminals, which are connected to a network including a Public Switched Network in a category thereof, mutually communicate through communication data addressed to a common phone number issued by a communication terminal being a management terminal”), wherein:

the network is provided with a phone number management unit (column 22, line 54 “an addressee”), a message management unit (10 on FIG. 1) and a bulletin board unit (column 70, line 34 “verbal bulletin board”), and the method comprising the steps of:

registering a predetermined communication terminal so as to correspond to the issued common phone number by sending an identification name of the predetermined communication terminal of the plurality of communication terminals to the phone

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number management unit in correspondence with the common phone number issued from the management terminal (column 22, lines 54-68) [The user dials the telephone numbers to be added in the distribution list code and the list is translated as an address of three digits];

sending a message file sent by accessing from a registered communication terminal to the common phone number to other registered communication terminals via the message management unit when a first mode in which the message file is to be directly sent to the other communication terminals is selected and leaving the message file in the message management unit (column 22, line 65 to column 23, line 2) [The voice mail system sends a single voice message to a number of people using the distribution list independently to each person within the group] and notifying the other registered communication terminals of arrival of the message file when a second mode (column 4, line 37 "constant light") in which any registered communication terminal accesses to the message management unit to receive the message file is selected (column 28, lines 18-46) [The inquiry function which enables the user to call the voice mail system after the system notifies the user for having messages waiting in a mailbox];

leaving a message sent by accessing from a registered communication terminal to the common phone number on the bulletin board unit (column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows the user to record a message and the recipient would use the feature known as verbal bulletin board]; and

reading at any time the message file left in the message management unit or the message left on the bulletin board unit from an arbitrary one of the registered communication terminals (column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows other users to access the receive only message address to hear message therein using the verbal bulletin board].

Regarding **claim 10**, Matthews discloses an electronic audio communications system with versatile message delivery (column 1, lines 12-17), (which reads on claimed “a communication method in which a plurality of communication terminals, which are connected to a network including a Public Switched Network in a category thereof, mutually communicate through communication data addressed to a common phone number issued by a communication terminal being a management terminal”), wherein:

the network is provided with a phone number management unit (column 22, line 54 “an addressee”), a message management unit (10 on FIG. 1) and a bulletin board unit (column 70, line 34 “verbal bulletin board”), and the method comprising the steps of:

registering, after being accessed by an arbitrary one of the plurality of communication terminals using the issued common phone number and receiving a confirmation by the management terminal, the arbitrary one of the communication terminals in correspondence with the common phone number issued from the management terminal (column 22, lines 54-68) [The user dials the telephone numbers

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to be added in the distribution list code and the list is translated as an address of three digits];

sending a message file sent by accessing from a registered communication terminal to the common phone number to other registered communication terminals via the message management unit when a first mode in which the message file is to be directly sent to the other communication terminals is selected (column 22, line 65 to column 23, line 2) [The voice mail system sends a single voice message to a number of people using the distribution list independently to each person within the group] and leaving the message file in the message management unit when a second mode in which any registered communication terminal accesses to the message management unit to receive the message file is selected (column 28, lines 18-46) [The inquiry function which enables the user to call the voice mail system after the system notifies the user for having messages waiting in a mailbox];

leaving a message sent by accessing from a registered communication terminal to the common phone number on the bulletin board unit (column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows the user to record a message and the recipient would use the feature known as verbal bulletin board]; and

reading at any time the message file left in the message management unit, in a case where the message file is left in the message management unit and the message left on the bulletin board unit (column 70, lines 2-33) [The system allows other users to access the receive only message address to hear messages that are stored in the received only message address], in a case where the message is left on the bulletin

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board unit, from an arbitrary one of the other registered communication terminals (column 70, lines 35-58) [The system allows other users to access the receive only message address to hear message therein using the verbal bulletin board].

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to **claims 1-12** have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gerald Gauthier whose telephone number is (703) 305-0981. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Fan Tsang can be reached on (703) 305-4895. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


g.g.

March 29, 2004

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